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ABSTRACT

The ethics and economics of supplemental teaching are discussed by a dean of continuing education. It is suggested that the provision of opportunities to faculty that take them away from their primary responsibilities is a minor aspect of the ethical problem. Continuing education overload compensation is generally low, and there are many people outside the university who seek to teach in the university's continuing education program. However, ethical conflicts for university faculty created by continuing education teaching may become more serious in the future. Three possible alternatives to faculty overload teaching are the expanded use of nonfaculty instructors, increasing the number of full-time continuing education faculty, and increasing the proportion of continuing education teaching by regular faculty as part of their normal teaching load. Nonfaculty instructors are generally people with strong educational qualifications and extensive experience in the field in which they are teaching. Full-time continuing education faculty are specialists not only in their subject fields but also in teaching those subjects to adults. However, a full-time staff is more expensive than a part-time faculty. It is possible that continuing education may come to be regarded as an integral part of campus instructional responsibilities of regular faculty members. (SW)

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Leonard Freedman

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THE ETHICS AND ECONOMICS OF SUPPLEMENTAL TEACHING

by

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I confess to feeling a little self-conscious about participating in a discussion of the ethical problem posed by supplemental faculty earnings. I am not, after all, a dispassionate observer, but a part of the problem, a source of the temptation which creates our ethical dilemma. For, as a continuing education dean I am one of those who encourages, urges, sometimes even implores my faculty colleagues to moonlight, to earn extra money in the form of "overload" payments for teaching evenings, weekends, and summers.

Of course, I do not speak to them only of money; and money is not the only reason faculty members engage in continuing education teaching. Many of them want to communicate the results of their research to practitioners in their field or to the general public; or they enjoy the give and take with people with much more experience than the typical college student body; or they are committed to the notion of providing a useful public service. Still, there's no question but that the most common incentive for overload teaching is the additional income it provides.

Now, while this may constitute a part of the ethical problem being examined at this conference -- the provision of opportunities to faculty that pull them away from their primary responsibilities -- it seems to me to represent a very minor aspect of that problem. For one thing, continuing education overload compensation is generally low -- typically much less than a proportional share of the regular salary scale. There are some glittering exceptions: lectures by academic superstars who are approachable only through their agents; and some of the short courses in engineering and management, in which the faculty can be paid substantial stipends out of the high student fees paid for by industry and government. But for the majority the salaries are modest, even meager, for there is not a great deal of state support around these days for continuing education, and much higher salary scales would price many of the programs out of the market.

So most of the continuing education overload earnings received by faculty are a response to need rather than greed; they may help meet the payments on the mortgage, but they don't buy very much at Neiman-Marcus.

Then, too, the ethical damage inflicted on faculty by the temptations of continuing education teaching is limited by the fact that much of it is undertaken by outsiders. The extent varies widely from institution to institution. According to a survey undertaken by Kristine Dillon and the University of Southern California Office of Institutional Studies, close to 60 percent of all continuing education teaching is conducted

by the faculty of the sponsoring institutions. However, in the big, primarily non-degree continuing education programs the proportion is much lower. At UCLA, for example, over 80 percent of the continuing education instruction is offered by people outside the UCLA faculty. Some of these are drawn from the faculties of other colleges and universities; but almost three-quarters of the total are not faculty members at all, but come from the professions and industry.

The fact is that many continuing education programs, including some of the biggest and best, find it extremely difficult to attract regular faculty members to continuing education instruction. Evening or weekend teaching may be inconvenient for them. They would rather not travel sometimes considerable distances, to meet their classes. The tendency on the part of adult audiences to speak back to the instructor is exhilarating to some faculty, but unnerving to others; the pay, as we have noted, is not very good; and the academic reward system awards little if any credit for overload teaching.

On the other hand there is no shortage of people outside the university who are delighted to be asked to teach in the institution's continuing education program. It is true that these outside instructors sometimes create their own kind of ethical problems. Thus they may use their classes to promote their own businesses or professional practices, or encourage the notion that, by virtue of teaching an Extension class, they are professors at the university. But these are problems of a different nature than those under consideration at this conference;

and to the extent that continuing education teaching is conducted by people outside the university the ethical dangers which continuing education might represent to our own faculties are obviously reduced.

Still, considerable numbers of regular faculty members teach continuing education courses. And it is a commonplace to observe that continuing education enrollments -- unlike those from the traditional college-age groups -- are likely to grow significantly during the next decade. Moreover, as inflation continues and faculty earnings fall further behind prevailing professional levels, faculty interest in supplementary income is likely to intensify. So, while the ethical conflicts presently created by continuing education teaching are rather limited in scale, it is conceivable that they could become somewhat more serious in the future.

What might be done to deal with this problem? Three possible alternatives to faculty overload teaching suggest themselves.

1. <u>The expanded use of non-faculty instructors</u> There is much to be said for the use of non-faculty members in the continuing education teaching programs of universities and colleges. In general, these are people with strong educational qualifications and extensive experience in the field in which they are teaching (and it is precisely that kind of experience which is responsive to the interests of adult students). Moreover, unlike our own faculties, they are usually willing to accept training in the special pedagogical needs of adults, and to have their performance in continuing education evaluated.

Just the same, no program presented in the university's name can have credibility if it does not include on its instructional staff a significant number of people drawn from its own faculty. In fact, some two-thirds of the continuing education deans queried in the Office of Institutional Studies' survey mentioned above agreed with the statement that: "Continuing education should increase its use of tenure-track faculty from the academic departments/schools of this institution"; and the median projection of the deans was that over the next ten years there would be a slight decline in the proportion of continuing education instruction undertaken by people from outside the faculty.

2. Increasing the number of full-time continuing education faculty In some ways this represents an attractive alternative to overload teaching. Full-time continuing education faculty, currently providing some 5 percent of all continuing education instruction in the institutions covered by the OIS survey, must meet rigorous academic requirements for appointment and promotion. They are specialists not only in their subject fields but also in teaching those subjects to adults. And continuing education teaching offers an alternative academic job market in a period of declining opportunities for young Ph.D.'s. Nor should there be any difficulty in imposing a requirement on full-time continuing education instructors that they not do any continuing education moonlighting.

However, a full-time instructional staff is inherently more expensive than a part-time faculty -- more expensive in large numbers than the field can sustain. And as long as

they are outside the regular campus structures they will never be fully accepted as equals by the campus faculty. In any case the continuing education deans surveyed by OIS see only a modest increase in prospect over the next ten years in the number of full-time specialists in continuing education teaching.

3. Increasing the proportion of continuing education teaching by regular faculty as part of their normal teaching load. According to the OIS study, 95 percent of continuing education deans believe that the regular faculty "should receive more recognition toward tenure, promotion, and salary for outstanding work in continuing education." The logical extension of this is that continuing education should come to be regarded as an integral part of campus instructional responsibilities, and that this should be included in the regular teaching load of the faculty. Indeed, the survey projected a significant increase of on-load continuing education teaching in the next ten years to perhaps one-fifth of total continuing education instruction.

There are solid grounds for this prediction. Shrinking enrollments among the young are already leading to an expansion of evening degree and other programs for older students in which faculty members teach as a necessary condition of the survival of their institution. And professional schools, spurred by such factors as state requirements for relicensure of professionals and by the increasing pace at which knowledge in most professional fields becomes obsolete, are developing an intense interest in continuing education and a growing willingness to recognize and even encourage faculty involvement in the field.

But it would be unrealistic to assume that recognition will come quickly or completely. Anything that falls outside the regular, full-time, on-campus schedule of the university will arouse suspicion and even disdain on the part of many faculty members and academic committees for years, probably decades to come. And where acceptance does come it is most likely to be afforded to those programs most closely akin to the traditional -- degree curricula or, at least, programs culminating in a certificate or other recognition of the completion of a substantial sequence of courses.

But by its nature a great deal of continuing education consists of short, discontinuous presentations on the current state of the art, of an important piece of new information, of a significant new technique. And these require relatively short-term involvements by several different faculty members, with the individuals involved changing from program to program. Faculty committees do not know how to assess this kind of contribution, and they are accordingly loath to recognize it as a regular teaching function.

Moreover, the kind of teaching involved is mostly in the evenings, or on weekends, and frequently off-campus. It is difficult to see how such programs can be staffed by regular faculty unless they are provided with some incentive beyond the sheer pleasure of the work and the call to public service.

And so we come back to the continued need for overload payments. That need, according to the projections of the continuing education deans, may decline slightly over the next decade because of an increase in on-load continuing education

teaching together with a modest growth in the number of full-time continuing education faculty. However, it appears certain that overload teaching will remain a significant part of the instructional mix.

For my part I do not see this as portending grave ethical problems. Certainly some limits should be set. Faculty members should not be encouraged to see themselves as completely independent entrepreneurs, using the university merely as a convenient and prestigious base of operations, and selling their talents to the highest bidder day by day.

However, continuing education is an increasingly important task of the university. Far from being a mere distraction from the institution's real work, it has become an important aspect of the university's mission. It is very much in the public interest to ensure that continuing education is provided at a high level of quality, carried out with a full awareness of academic and professional ethics; in other words, continuing education should be offered by universities and other responsible institutions, and not by the get-rich-quick operators who are crowding into the field. But it is difficult to see how to involve the university adequately unless, for at least some of the faculty in some of the programs, a reasonable additional honorarium is provided.

No doubt this is a concession -- perhaps an unfortunate one -- to the prevailing materialistic ethos in America. But in my experience most faculty members are not entirely impervious to that ethos; and to ask that we ignore that fact would inflict a grave disadvantage on an essential function of the university.